

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

September 12, 2013

The Honorable Mignon Clyburn
Acting Chairwoman
The Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street SW
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Acting Chairwoman Clyburn:

We write to you today regarding the ability of emergency response personnel to locate individuals who place 9-1-1 calls from a wireless phone. Today, Americans can rely on emergency responders to locate them when they place a 9-1-1 call using a landline. As consumers increasingly rely on wireless phones, it is critical that the location data available to emergency responders for wireless 9-1-1 calls is reliable as well.

The percentage of households that have only wireless service continues climb. The Center for Disease Control reported that in 2012, 35.8 percent of all American homes only had wireless phones. For households with children, this number is higher. It is not surprising, then, that more 9-1-1 calls are being placed from wireless phones. According to CTIA – the Wireless Association, almost 400,000 wireless 9-1-1 calls are made every day. Nationally, over 70 percent of 9-1-1 calls are from wireless phones. In urban areas, public safety answering points (PSAPs) have reported receiving 86 percent of calls from wireless phones.

These wireless callers, however, do not have the same assurance as landline callers that emergency responders will be able to locate them. Due to the fact that most wireless phones are mobile, it is understandable that providing the exact location of a 9-1-1 caller presents unique difficulties. Such problems are exacerbated in rural and remote areas, where coverage may be minimal or impeded by terrain, as well as in dense urban areas, due to buildings and that many calls are placed from within these structures.

Nonetheless, data recently filed at the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) by the California Chapter of the National Emergency Number Association (CalNENA) raises concerns that emergency responders are unable to locate a growing number of wireless 9-1-1 callers. Further, the filing also suggests that wireless carriers are experiencing challenges within the current location information system.

We recognize that the FCC has adopted rules to improve the ability to locate wireless 9-1-1 callers, and are pleased that the FCC's Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau will hold a

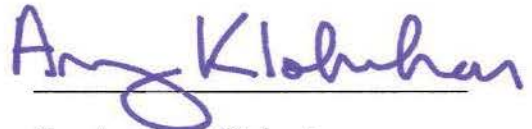
public workshop on this issue. At this workshop, it is our hope that FCC staff will look closely at the data filed by CalNENA, as well as related filings by wireless carriers, and additionally review data from around the country to examine the efficacy of the current system and the practices of its various participants in transmitting location information for all 9-1-1 callers. Further, we agree that the workshop should examine the availability of location technologies and the associated costs for wireless carriers and consumers. Ultimately, we urge the FCC to use this opportunity to reevaluate the current 9-1-1 location system, and ensure that wireless callers, regardless of the technology used or location from which a call is made, can be reasonably located by emergency responders.

Thank you in advance for your prompt consideration, and we look forward to your response.

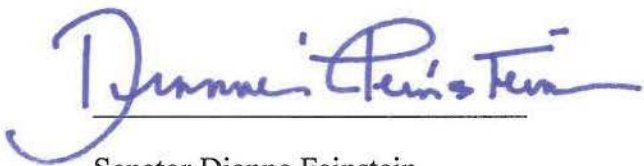
Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Mark Pryor in blue ink.

Senator Mark Pryor

Handwritten signature of Amy Klobuchar in blue ink.

Senator Amy Klobuchar

Handwritten signature of Dianne Feinstein in blue ink.

Senator Dianne Feinstein

Handwritten signature of Barbara Boxer in blue ink.

Senator Barbara Boxer

Cc: FCC Commissioner Rosenworcel
FCC Commissioner Pai